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TO MR. JOL DEAL, ERDA, 119-534

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Mr. Ichord. I think we should hear from them at this time as to what extent the islands can be decontaminated and how safe they will be.

Mr. Brinkley. Mr. Chairman, while he is coming up may I ask a question?

If in fact, the Atomic Energy Commission does certify as to its safety, and if that fact were controverted by a radiation illness, then there would be a legal liability because of certification.

Mr. Kazin. Of course, there would.

Mr. Ichord. That is why we should hear from ERDA this time.

General Johnson. Let me explain the roll if I may.

The Atomic Energy Commission, now ERDA, made a survey to determine what they felt would be necessary to assure levels of radioactivity that would create no danger to the people when they returned.

We, then, will clean up to those levels of radioactivity.

While we are doing that and subsequently ERDA will monitor to find out that we have attained those standards.

They, then, will say, Yes, you have attained those standards, and those are the standards accepted internationally as being safe for people.

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1 Now, if they were wrong, or if the standards were
2 wrong, then, of course, there could be a liability.

3 I don't think anybody can deny that. But I believe
4 very strongly what we are doing will meet those standards
5 and will assure the safety of the people.

6 Now, As I say, we do have representatives
7 here from ERDA.

8 Mr. Deal.

9 Mr. Brinkley. We have a precedent already, too. That
10 is the standards, you know, Hiroshima, and the other Japanese
11 island.

12 The people were there. It is not unprecedented in that
13 respect.

14 General Johnson. We also have some precedents where
15 we had a nuclear accident at Palomares, and an agreement
16 where we cleaned the Sabris up.

17 Mr. Brinkley. Yes.

18 Mr. Ichord. Who is the representative from ERDA?
19 would you identify yourself for the record?

20 Voice. Yes, sir.

21 My name is Deal. I'm Assistant Director (of ^{for Health Protection} ~~our~~
22 ⁴²⁰ operational safety ~~division~~.

23 Mr. Ichord. Your first name?

24 Mr. Deal. L.J. are my initials. Our office has
25 the responsibility of the followup of [the program,] the
radiological safety aspects of the program, which these

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gentleman have been speaking to.

Mr. Ichord. The gentleman from Texas, Mr. Deal, has suggested that we go vote, there is another vote.

The Chair will reluctantly declare another ten-minute recess while the Members vote.

(Recessed at 3:25 p.m.)

(Time noted: 3:38 p.m.)

Mr. Ichord. The meeting will again come to order.

Mr. Deal is recognized to proceed as he wishes.

Mr. Deal. I thought I might say a word, Mr. Chairman, about the role that we inherited from ^{ERDA} ~~our~~ ^{the} AEC organization ~~change, but it started out~~ ^{AFK, NOW ERDA} we were to be the people who would do -- would provide the technical advice on radiological cleanup, the standards, and the recommendations on rehabilitation, and we ^{began} did this by conducting a very extensive radiological survey as Mr. ^{Mitchell} mentioned.

We prepared a study, ^{by} a task group [study], which is [all] available in the Environmental Impact Statement, that General Johnson has prepared, ^{critique for} on the cleanup program and on the recommendations ^{to North American People} for them to follow.

We used conservative standards in this whole approach to the standards that Mr. Mitchell mentioned, and we believe [that if] the standards are such that ^{IF LNR clean} -- and all of our ^{status and the results in use of the AEC} studies indicated if the standards are adhered to

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and the recommendations we made in our report, there would be no risks above those you would see in a normal population from the ^{natural background} radiation.

Mr. Ichord. As to the entire island?

Mr. Deal. If they follow our recommendation.

Mr. Ichord. No risk under a certain limitation you have established.

Mr. Deal. That is right, sir, following the recommendations we made in our report which do include restricting use of the northern islands.

Mr. Ichord. Are there any questions of Mr. Deal?

If not, thank you very much.

The gentleman from Texas, were you seeking recognition?

Mr. Kasin. No, sir.

I was just wondering, Mr. Chairman, how long would this cleanup job take?

General Johnson. About 30 months, sir.

Mr. Kasin. About 30 months.

What is the condition of the ^{waters} [waters] around the land there? Are they contaminated, or have they since been washed off, or any contamination that might have existed has disappeared?

Mr. Deal. The marine life ~~and~~ the fish can be used. Fortunately, there is ^{apparently almost} no ~~great~~ ^{contamination} in the fish, there is contamination in the water, but it doesn't

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1 yet in the food, it is in the bottom sediment.

2 Mr. Katin. Any fish caught anywhere in those islands,
3 is edible?

4 Mr. Deal. Yes, sir.

5 Mr. Ichord. Of course, you see the question that
6 was bothering us, it is not going to be possible to contract
7 for future non-liability, we all know as lawyers
8 that is impossible.

9 There will always be a question of fact.

10 What ERDA is willing to certify is that once
11 these islands -- this action is taken -- as is proposed
12 by General Johnson -- and that the islands are used
13 under the conditions which you specify -- you think they will
14 be safe?

15 Mr. Deal. Yes, sir.

16 Mr. Ichord. There is no danger to the people?

17 Mr. Deal. Not from radiation.

18 Mr. Ichord -- returning to the island?

19 Mr. Deal. No, sir.

20 Mr. Ichord. Of course, if you are wrong, in that
21 assessment, then we could have possible liability to these
22 people.

23 Mr. Deal. We plan to ^{do} follow-up monitoring just
24 like we do now. As you know, there was a mishap during
25 the test period in the -- ^{and} when the Island Rongelap was

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1 *with fallout*
2 hit and there were natives exposed there.

3 We have a medical team that follows those people;
4 they go in twice a year, and make studies on the people.
5 They whole-body count them and they have done blood studies.

6 Of all the children exposed at that time *the* under nine
7 *year* old have had some kind of thyroid difficulty.

8 One man died of leukemia a year or so ago. There was
9 *the* one cancer case. We have this follow-up program going.

10 We will include Bikini in the follow-up and in fact
11 it has already started in the follow-up. The people have
12 started moving back to Bikini, and our medical teams
13 now go there, *the same is true with Eniwetok, when Eniwetok*
14 *starts*, our medical teams will go there.

15 We also do a radiological survey at the same time.
16 We collect samples of the food and fish, and check on
17 the environmental movement of the radioactivity.

18 Mr. Beard. On the follow-up, in other words, they are
19 sent over there and then you follow-up, but you found
20 in the follow-up situations --

21 Mr. Deal. No, that came from the fall-out of a
22 nuclear test. Those people were taken off the island
23 because of a fall-out from a nuclear test.

24 It was an accident.

25 Mr. Beard. I see.

26 Mr. Deal. They were exposed, everybody knew that.

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1 Mr. Beard. I see. Okay.

2 Mr. Mitchell. May I clarify that?

3 Mr. Beard. Yes.

4 Mr. Mitchell. In 1954, the test at Bikini the first
5 hydrogen bomb, the wind went the wrong way, and fairly
6 large amounts of radioactive fall-out were deposited
7 at Rongelap.

8 The problem we have there is the people were exposed
9 from the beginning.

10 It is a matter of trying to treat them from that time
11 down to this.

12 Our objective for the Eniwetok program, of course,
13 is to avoid any exposure, internal or external, from the
14 outset.

15 Mr. Ichord. The Chair recognizes Mr. Shumate to ask
16 some questions for the record.

17 Mr. Shumate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 Mr. Mitchell, as I understand the testimony up to right
19 now, are these the islands referred to as the Northern
20 Islands?

21 Mr. Mitchell. Yes, sir.

22 You start with Runit. You see, Runit just below the
23 line. Start with Runit and all the islands from there up
24 in a counterclockwise direction (referring to a chart.)

25 Mr. Shumate: The island we are talking about is

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